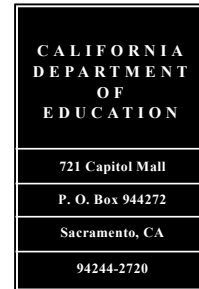




DELAINÉ EASTIN
State Superintendent of Public Instruction



August 27, 2001

To: Selected County and District Superintendents
Selected Charter School Administrators

From: William L. Padia, Director
Policy and Evaluation Division

Subject: **School Type Designations for the 2001 Academic Performance Index**
Ref: PED—EPIC—01—06

Beginning with the 2001 Growth and Base API, the Educational Planning and Information Center (EPIC) of the California Department of Education (CDE) will use standard criteria to define schools as elementary, middle, or high for programs linked to the Academic Performance Index (API). Eligibility for the Certificated Staff Performance Incentive Act (CSPIA; AB 1114) and the Immediate Intervention/Underperforming Schools Program (II/USP) is restricted to schools in the bottom half of the API distribution, which is determined according to school type. Similarly, each school's statewide and similar schools rankings are reported according to school type.

For the 1999-2000 API cycle, the CDE used the school type associated with a school's county-district-school (CDS) code, commonly referred to as the "school ownership code." Districts that wished to change their schools' classifications were provided with the opportunity to change. Due to the flexibility in the school ownership code criteria, manipulation of eligibility for the awards or intervention programs could occur if schools changed school type classifications inappropriately. **Therefore, the CDE has developed standard criteria for defining school type to ensure the credibility of programs linked to the API and to maintain the integrity of the accountability system.** These criteria will be used to assign a school type for API purposes. Schools in the alternative accountability system that opt into the main API system will also be assigned an API school type using these criteria. The Data Review Reports that will be posted on the CDE web site at the end of August will use the new school type criteria for schools that will receive an API.

Criteria for Determining School Type for API Purposes

The criteria for determining school type for the API are based upon “core grade spans” of K-5, 7-8, and 9-12 (grade 6 purposefully not represented). For each school, the number of grade levels in each core grade span is determined, and then the school’s type is based on the core grade span with the most grade levels. Schools with a grade span across the three core grade spans (e.g., K-12 or K-10) or that have the same number of grade levels for two core grade spans (e.g., 4-8 or 8-9) will be assigned school type according to the largest enrollment in a core grade span.

PLEASE NOTE: Our records show that you DO NOT HAVE SCHOOLS that have been assigned an API school type that is different from the CDS code school type of elementary, middle, or high. NO ACTION IS NECESSARY ON YOUR PART.

A detailed description of the criteria for determining school type for the 2001 API is located on the CDE web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/psaa/api>.

More Information

More information about the API and other provisions of the Public Schools Accountability Act are located on the CDE API web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/psaa/api>. If you have further questions about the criteria or process for assigning school type for API purposes, contact the Educational Planning and Information Center at <epic@cde.ca.gov> or by phone at (916) 657-2273.

BP:jv